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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the American Association for Community and Junior Colleges (AACJC)/Metropolitan Life Foundation project at Wytheville Community College (WCC) was to address the critical shortage of nursing professionals in southwest Virginia. The project consisted of establishing a pilot nursing education program between the associate degree nursing program at WCC and one of the high school-based practical nursing programs within the college's service region. An articulation agreement was developed between WCC and two service region practical nurse programs. The agreement established a system by which prospective students, specifically minorities and males, are identified and recruited as early as the ninth grade. The students are then guided into a set of classes which meet high school graduation requirements, and satisfy college associate degree nursing program pre-requisites, and allow for entry into one of the practical nursing programs, and, upon completion, admission to the second year of the college's associate degree nursing program. Specifically students will enroll in the preclinical practical nursing education programs as seniors in high school. The program allows for completion of the associated degree nursing program within two years of high school completion. Though completed, the articulation agreement has yet to be signed. In addition, the curriculum has not yet been approved by the State Board of Nursing. Completion of all remaining project activities is scheduled for the fall semester 1991. A copy of the articulation agreement is attached. (JMC)

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Wytheville Community College
Wytheville, Virginia

JC 910 456

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The AACJC Metropolitan Life Foundation
Registered Nurse Shortage Project
Wytheville Community College

As a result of the AACJC/Metropolitan Life Foundation Registered Nurse Shortage grant project, Wytheville Community College's associate degree nursing program has successfully completed an articulation agreement with two service area practical nursing programs. The agreement provides for recruitment and identification of students as early as the 9th grade; a guided set of high school classes which satisfy high school graduation requirements and college nursing program prerequisites, entry into one of the practical nursing programs; and, upon completion, admission to the second year of the college's associate degree nursing program via a summer bridge course. Within two years of graduation from high school, students can complete a practical nursing program and an associate degree nursing program. Although there have been some delays in the implementation of certain project activities such as printing and disseminating promotional materials, it is expected that initial recruitment and identification of students will begin in the fall term of 1991. Those students will be entering the college program in 1995 or 1996. Students who complete the practical nursing program in the meantime will also be eligible to enter the college program if all prerequisites have been met through the same bridge course requirements.

FINAL REPORT

The AACJC Metropolitan Life Foundation
Registered Nurse Shortage Project
Wytheville Community College

The purpose of the AACJC/Metropolitan Life Foundation project at Wytheville Community College was to address the critical shortage of nursing professionals in Southwest Virginia by establishing a pilot high school/college nurse education program between the associate degree nursing program at Wytheville Community College and one of the high school-based practical nursing programs within the college's service region. Despite some unexpected difficulties, an articulation agreement (copy attached) has been developed between the college and two service region practical nurse programs instead of the one program indicated in the grant proposal. The agreement directly addresses the original objectives of the project. It establishes a system by which prospective students, including minorities and males, are recruited and identified as early as the 9th grade and are subsequently guided into a set of classes which will meet high school graduation requirements, complete the practical nurse programs, and satisfy college associate degree nursing program prerequisites. Specifically, students will enroll in the practical nursing education programs, the preclinical phase of which will be taken while a senior in high school. The clinical phase of the program will be taken in a post-high school year. At the completion of the clinical phase, students will be able to sit for the exam which will lead to licensure as a practical nurse. Students who are successful in the practical nurse program can then enter the second year of the college associate degree program via a summer bridge course. Once the second year of the associate degree program is completed and

college general education requirements are satisfied, students will be eligible to sit for the NCLEX exam leading to registry as a professional nurse (R.N.). College general education courses may also be completed while in high school or while in the practical nurse program through dual credit (college and high school credit) or through the college's evening program. The process allows students to enter the high school practical nursing program and, upon completion, move into the WCC associate degree nursing program, having met all program prerequisites, with advanced standing, and a minimum of content redundancy.

Although an articulation agreement was developed, the planned project implementation was not without problems. For example, one of the college's full-time nursing faculty was called to active duty in the fall for Operation Desert Shield. This loss, coupled with an increased student enrollment in the sophomore nursing class, did not allow for complete assignment of release time for WCC program faculty to work on the project. The effect was to delay the projected implementation timetable. Another problem that arose involved one of the cooperating practical nursing programs. Changes in state adult education funding made it necessary for the Twin County School of Practical Nursing to seek other funding or face closure. A proposal was made to Wytheville Community College to assume the responsibility for operating the program and, after lengthly negotiations, an agreement was reached. This uncertainty surrounding the future of the practical nurse program caused further delay. Finally, as a measure to deal with a severe shortfall in state revenue, an early retirement program was offered to qualifying faculty. The project director, Louise Compton, elected to take advantage of the offer.

The cumulative effect of these unforeseen and uncontrollable circumstances is that several of the anticipated project outcomes have been delayed.

The articulation agreement is yet unsigned; the curriculum has yet to be approved by the State Board of Nursing; and recruitment and promotional materials, although in development, must still be printed and disseminated (sample brochure draft attached). Once completed, a special effort will be made to direct the promotional materials to the attention of minorities, males, and non-traditional students as another pathway to enter the nursing profession and to complete successfully the WCC associate degree nursing program. It is anticipated that all remaining project activities will be completed by the end of the 1991 fall semester (December 15th).

Since several of the project outcomes have been delayed, not all of the funds that were allocated for the grant have been spent. To date, $4,547.30 has been expended for travel, meetings, and personnel costs. The college, therefore, requests that those funds budgeted for promotional materials ($2,100 for recruitment video, posters, and brochure) and a remaining portion of local travel and replacement costs for faculty (total of $1,033.76) be extended through the fall semester of 1991. An extension of the project and accompanying funds will permit Wytheville Community College to implement fully the various activities that were the focus of the grant proposal as originally developed and approved. Because of overestimation of the amount budgeted for replacement costs for high school faculty to participate in planning, it does not appear that the balance of grant funds ($768) will be needed to complete the project.

WYTHEVILLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
MODEL FOR NURSING ARTICULATION AND COORDINATION

The purpose of this articulation agreement is to describe a program which provides students with a non-duplicative sequence of educational opportunities which will take them from a practical nurse program through an associate degree nursing program in an expeditious manner. The program allows for rapid career advancement to the professional nursing level by establishing systematic, comprehensive links between secondary schools and the college. The agreement provides identification of prospective students early in their high school careers; establishes guidance and counseling to assure that students understand their career choice and complete all pre-requisites; and ensures recognition of previous knowledge which sets the students apart from the usual associate degree nursing student.

PARTICIPANTS

To achieve that purpose, the Smyth County Vocational School practical nursing program and the Twin County School of practical nursing program, together with Wytheville Community College's associate degree nursing program agree to the conditions and requirements outlined below.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Students in the secondary schools will be identified as prospects for the articulated program as early as the 9th grade. The identified students will be guided into the set of courses identified by the college's associate degree program as pre-requisites, and into the practical nurse program. Those students who successfully complete the post-secondary portion of the practical nurse program and who meet college and program requirements for admission

(see below) will enter into a 5-credit "bridge" course. Successful completion of the bridge course will allow credit to be granted for all 1st-year associate degree nursing courses. The students will then be integrated into the 2nd-year of the program and, completing all other requirements, will be eligible to be graduated with an associate degree in nursing.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Students identified for the articulation program will complete as part of, or in addition to, their normal requirements for graduation from high school the following:

   1 unit of biology

   1 unit of chemistry

   1 unit of algebra

   Students must maintain at least a "C" average in these classes.

2. Students to be admitted to the bridge course must have been graduated from one of the schools of practical nursing listed herein within five years from the date of admission to that program and must be, or be eligible to be, licensed as a practical nurse in Virginia.

3. The students must meet all of the college's admissions criteria including:

   a. a completed official application for admission

   b. official transcripts from all high schools attended

   c. a health form

   Students must also score high enough on writing and reading placements tests so that remedial work is not required or complete those requirements during the post graduate clinical phase of the practical nurse program.

4. Students must complete the Anatomy and Physiology course and the Microbiology course required in the associate degree nursing curriculum

before they will be allowed to enter the second-year of the associate degree program. These courses are considered pre-requisites to the 2nd-year, sophomore nursing courses.

5. Before graduation, students must complete all associate degree general educational requirements.

IMPLEMENTATION

A. Wytheville Community College and the Associate Degree in Nursing program will:

   a. disseminate information about this agreement to students and college personnel;

   b. assist in providing advising and counseling services;

   c. provide instruction in the "bridge" course.

B. The Schools of Practical Nursing will:

   a. disseminate information about this agreement to current and prospective students and graduates;

   b. identify prospective students as early as the 9th grade;

   c. provide advising and counseling services.

This agreement is effective upon signature of all parties. The agreement will be reviewed every two years by designated representatives of the college and the Schools of Practical Nursing or whenever major curriculum or academic policy changes occur.

ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges
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